

"And I Will Give You Rest."

If we believed, we should arise and sing,
Dropping our burdens at His pierced feet.
Sorrow would flee, and weariness take wing,
Hard things grow fair, and bitter waters sweet.

If we believed, what room for fear or care
Within His arms, safe sheltered on his breast?
Peace for our pain, and hope for our despair
Is what He meant who said, "I give thee rest."

Why linger, turn away, or idly grieve?
Where else is rest—the soul's supremest need?
Grandly he offers; meanly we receive.
Yet love that gives us rest is love indeed.

The love that rests, say, shall it not do more?
Make haste, sad souls, thy heritage to claim.
It calms; it heals; it bears what erst ye bore,
And marks thy burdens with His own dear name.

Carried in Him and for Him, can they harm
Or press thee sore, or prove a weary weight?
Nay, nay; into thy life His blessed calm
Shall drop, and thou no more be desolate.

No more with downcast eyes go faltering on,
Alone and sick at heart, and closely pressed.
Thy chains shall break; thy heavy heart be gone,
For He who calls thee, He will "give thee rest."

—MARY LOWE DICKINSON, in *Congregationalist*.

A Little Jog.

BY J. H. WORST.

"My son, I understand that you have joined the Brethren church."

"I have sir."

"Didn't you know that is a small insignificant organization and some of its tenets openly ridiculed?"

"Yes sir; but *Christ's* church was small too when five years old, and was openly ridiculed and even persecuted by the meanest men in the world. Truth has ever been unpopular sir, until it shames its enemies out of countenance through its pure and winning ways."

"I understand that you pretend to observe all the teachings of the Gospel."

"No sir, we don't pretend, we just obey them all."

"Aha! but you wash feet and it is no command at all."

"Why not?"

"Because it is not given in the imperative mode."

"What of it. Do you suppose serving God is like buying junk—get all you can for as little money as possible? If Christ said 'I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you;' and, 'ye also ought to wash one another's feet,' that is enough for a man that attaches any value to heaven. Do you suppose now that I intend to join issue with God and say 'look here; you didn't get foot-washing in the correct mode; you ought to have used the imperative mode, see! and now I will not obey it.'"

"But wasn't that 'example' only for the twelve that were with Him in that upper room in Jerusalem?"

"Evidently not. An *example* implies a repetition of the act again and again. Besides Christ said, 'if ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them; and if foot-washing was only for the twelve, evidently the supper and eucharist was also only for them and not for the church.'"

"Oh! foot-washing was only a Jewish custom, and its sole virtue consisted in cleansing sandled feet."

"Strange then that Jesus said, 'know ye what I have done to you?' and 'ye are clean but not all. For He knew him that should betray Him; therefore said he, ye are not all clean.' Does dust cling more tenaciously to a traitor's feet? And had Peter grown so old and yet knew so little about that Jewish custom?"

"My son, aside from John the Gospel is very silent on that subject. Even history does not mention it."

"John quotes Christ and Christ is all the authority I want. Once mentioned by Christ as a Christian obligation and it is as valid as though the Bible and history were full of it. Must Christ tell his children again and again to do a thing before they need obey Him?"

"Then why do not all denominations observe that rite?"

"That is what puzzles me father."

"What merit do you attach to foot-washing, my son?"

"The example was given and its observance made obligatory, evidently for a purpose. The mere fact of formal obedience avails nothing, evidently, for Christ would not thus speculate with obedience or disobedience. One thing is apparent, all denominations ignoring it divorce themselves from all its advantages; while those who obey it as a matter of record—get their feet washed."

"But, my son, those feet that are washed will soon go down into the earth and decay; then what does it matter whether they were ever thus washed or not?"

"It is not for the sake of the feet that we wash feet. The literal act must reach the heart, and the influence emanating from foot-washing must contribute toward the expansion and development of the soul or prove unavailing. Its merit consists in imparting a peculiar and essential influence to the spiritual nature of man, whereby it grows away from the passions and desires of the flesh and develops upward toward God. In all organizations these are essential formalities which train and educate the mind through physical evolutions."

"Then you don't obey this rite simply to make a record of obedience?"

"No sir. Its obedience is rendered obligatory in order to make it an adjunct, or agent whereby the spiritual nature is touched and heightened and glorified through physical service."

"Is that the only way to touch the spiritual nature?"

"No sir. It is one of the ways."

"Isn't prayer a better way to reach the heart?"

"Prayer is physical exercise, just as much so as foot-washing or the Lord's Supper. God knows whether or not we are thankful for what we enjoy, and what is best for us before we move our lips in prayer. Prayer in one sense is work; in another it is a communion of the spirit with God—talking to God. From the physical exercise the nature reaches after God and gradually gravitates toward Him until the affinity becomes marked, and our spiritual nature comes in harmony with the spirit of God. We gravitate from a purely physical nature into that divine nature very largely through the medium of physical prayer. Yes sir, prayer has its office, just the same as foot-washing, as an adjunct to spiritual growth, and can no more be dispensed with than foot-washing without marring Christ's beautiful and comprehensive system of development, education and purification of the 'inner man.'"

"Is there not danger of formality resulting from so much obedience?"

"Yes sir. Thousands doubtless pray and wash feet, and their only standing in the Christian world is one of fact and not of spirituality. But that is no valid reason for discarding a good thing."

If a school boy can see no other advantage in a globe than turning the crank, that would be no valid excuse for pitching it out of the window.

The 'Lord's' and Master's' must be made servants: the stratas of society must be broken up; the followers of Christ must be on an equality for we 'are all one in Christ Jesus.'

This spirit of autocracy must be cleansed from the heart, and malice, selfishness, and hypocrisy, such as crowded the heart of Judas must be clean; and the pledge of fraternity embraced in the lowly act of washing a brother's feet is naturally calculated to stifle every feeling of aristocracy, and should hypocrisy follow it renders it doubly odious.

A man can hardly stoop and wash a brother's feet without his serving notice to God, the world and the church, that he cannot afford to afterwards act otherwise toward him than what is symbolized in the act; and that feeling reaching his heart, burns its mark there and becomes firmly seated on its throne.

Besides that, heaven is cheap enough at any price and the man that attempts to jew God down and secure easier terms places a low estimate upon eternal life or a high estimate upon the long suffering of Jehovah.

Gratitude seeks to do more than is required rather than less, while ingratitude seeks the reverse."

"Yes father. I was a long time in doubt, but now having started I mean to observe every form without formality, and incorporate into my spiritual nature the full force of every blessing that follows obedience."

God wants me for what I can make of my spiritual nature, 'working with Him' and He with me, and when I come to the grave I will leave the ordinances behind me for others to use, and I will go forth just as they will have made me through God's blessing and grace."

Then it will matter little whether I was a stickler for ceremonials as such; but whether through obedience I have attained unto that divine nature sufficiently to enter heaven through the forces of spiritual gravity.

Jan. 21, 1888.

Foot-washing as an Act of Hospitality.

A brother in Illinois clipped the following article from an Adventist paper named the *Crisis*, and requests a reply thereto. It appeared under the head of "Western Editorials."

FEET WASHING AND HOLY KISSING.

Bro. Sheldon:—I see many brethren asking you different questions on which they wish to gain information, and as I notice always a prompt answer in reply, I would like also to ask you the following questions, to which I hope to get a reply from you. 1. I notice in reading in St. John 13: 1-10 that Jesus washed his disciples' feet, and told them that they ought to wash one another's feet, and he told Peter if he washed not he would have no part with him. We also have feet washing mentioned in 2 Tim. 5: 16. Now this seems to me a direct command. If this is essential to our salvation, why do we as a people not practice it as it is commanded? 2. Also in four or five places in Paul's Epistles we read something like this: "Greet one another with a holy kiss," etc. Please tell me through the *Crisis* why we do not practice those things in our church.

If those commands have been done away with, when were they done away with, and by what authority? I will look in the *Crisis* for an answer. Your brother in the true service of our coming Lord.

JOHN J. VANDERBEE.

A few words on these themes may throw light on some anxious minds, and forestall future confusion to some extent.

1. Feet washing is all right when *unperverted*. To claim, as many do, first, that it was instituted by Christ, and, secondly, that it was enjoined by him as an act of worship, is all wrong. A little reflection will make this clear.

Feet washing, instead of being instituted by Christ, was an ancient practice dating back many centuries before the first advent, and was recognized as still in practice by Christ himself even before he washed his disciples' feet; but it was practiced only as an act of hospitality, and not of worship. We present samples of sacred history. Said Abraham to his guests: "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves." Gen. 18: 4. Said Lot to his guests: "Turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet." Gen. 19: 2. Said Laban to his guest: "Come in . . . and the man came into the house; and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him." Gen. 24: 32. It is said of Joseph's brethren: "And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet." Gen. 43: 24. Said the old man at Gibeah to the traveling Levite and family: "Lodge not in the street. So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses; and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink." Judges 19: 21. Said Jesus to Simon: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears." Luke 7: 44. This was a long established practice, as an act of hospitality, and Simon was thus chided by the Savior for omitting this act of kind treatment, even long before he washed his disciples' feet: so it was not instituted by the Savior, but recognized by him as a practice of ancient origin.

2. Feet washing, as practiced by Christ; was advanced from an act of hospitality to an act of servitude—hospitable servitude—in which he, though their Lord and Master, became their servant, stooping to perform for them the lowest act of servitude (not of worship) in washing their feet—the Master washing the feet of the servants, to teach them a lesson on this line—saying to Peter: "What I do thou knowest not now (you don't understand its import now), but thou shalt know hereafter." So after he had got through, he began to instruct them thus: "Know ye what I have done to you?" They knew that he had literally washed their feet, instead of simply washing their feet, instead of simply furnishing them water to wash their own feet after the Oriental practice; but they did not know the import of the act; so he proceeded to say: "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well (you correctly call me so); for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought to wash one another's feet." John 13: 7, 12-14. What does he mean? Simply what he says—literal feet washing included, not, however, as an act of worship, but of hospitable servitude; but the principle is not confined to this lowest act, but is far reaching, and is expressed by the apostle in these words: "Ye ought to lay down your lives for the brethren," not as an act of worship, however. To simply see this act of the Savior, and not to see the force of his object teaching, is not to see far enough; and to take this act out of the list of good works, and constitute it an act of worship, is to pervert the Savior's lesson.

3. In agreement with the foregoing remarks, we find feet washing once more mentioned in the New Testament, and placed in the catalogue of good works, but not made an act of worship: "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." 1 Tim. 5: 10. The fact that this is the only record of feet washing after Jesus washed his disciples' feet, and that it is here put into the list of "good works" merely, and is not coupled with acts of worship, shows how it was understood by the apostles. Feet washing is all right where it belongs, even in our day, but is all wrong when taken out of its place.

Taken as a whole, the article is a fine specimen of the deception that preachers and religious writers often use for the purpose of concealing the truth from inquiring but uncritical minds. It is this style of theology that makes infidels of able men, more than any other potent influence. Here is a man who desires to know the truth, and he goes to one whom he supposes is honest and conscientious. He writes about a command that the Lord Jesus Christ gave on the night that he was betrayed into the hands of sinners. In the reply, the western editorial man shifts short off to the washing of feet as an act of hospitality, and totally ignores every passage of scripture where it is a religious institution and holy ordinance, except the single one of John 13th, which was the basis of the questioner's inquiry. This single paragraph is a sufficient answer to the article, but while we are at this theme, several points will be alluded to.

In Bible times there were two kinds of washing feet as there are at the present time. A foot-washing of civil decency and one as a religious ordinance. Reference to the citations made in the above article shows us that the hospitality con-